A29

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

STATE

AGRICULTURAL CONVENTION,

HELD

At the Capitol, in the City of Albany,

On the 14th, 15th and 16th February, 1832:

WITH THE

CONSTITUTION

OF A

STATE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY,

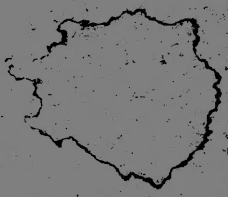
AGREED TO AND ADOPTED,

BY THE SAID CONVENTION.

New York

ALBANY:

Printed by Webster and Skinners—1832.



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New York state agricultural society

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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

State Agricultural Convention.

At a Convention of Delegates, and other Citizens, from different Counties of the State of New-York, pursuant to public notice, in the Assembly Chamber, in the City of Albany, on the 14th February, 1832 :

LE RAY DE CHAUMONT, of Jefferson County, was chosen President.

AMBROSE SPENCER, of Albany, and
HENRY W. DELAVAN, of Saratoga, } Vice-Presidents.

JESSE BUEL, of Albany, and
AMOS BRIGGS, of Rensselaer, } Secretaries.

The following are the names of the Delegates appointed, and of other Gentlemen attending from the several Counties, viz.

ALBANY.

Jesse Buel,
Ambrose Spencer,
S. Van Rensselaer, jr.
John I. Godfrey,
Joseph Alexander,
Edward C. Delavan,
Thomas Hillhouse,
John Schuyler,
Isaiah Townsend,
Abel French,
P. S. Van Rensselaer,
Alfred Conkling,
Charles R. Webster,
Jacob Ten Eyck,
Teunis Van Vechten,
William Walsh,
William Seymour,
D. B. Slingerland,
William James,

Volkert P. Douw,
Philip Lennebecker,
Abijah C. Disbrow,
Benjamin Westervelt,
Henry W. Snyder,
Nathan Sanford,
William Mayell,
Wm. M'Culloch,
W. P. Van Rensselaer,
Benjamin Knower,
Samuel Cheever,
Henry Greene.

ALLEGANY.

Philip Church.

CAYUGA.

W. H. Seward.

CHENANGO.

Richard W. Juliand,
Edmund G. Per Lee,
Joseph Juliand,
James Birdsall,
Samuel Campbell,
Noah Ely.

CHAUTAUQUE.

James Mullet.

CLINTON.

Josiah Fisk.

COLUMBIA.

John P. Beekman,
Peter J. Hoes,
Peter N. Bain,
Lawrence Van Buren,
Medad Butler,
Edward P. Livingston,
Isaac Mills,
Jonas White,
Barent Van Buren,
Peter Van Alstyne,
Tobias L. Hogeboom.

CORTLAND.

Charles W. Lynde.

DUTCHESS.

Isaac R. Adriance,
Jacob Shook,
John Wilkinson,
Obadiah Titus,
Robert Coffin,
Thomas Taber,
Eli Hamblin,
Walter Cunningham.

ESSEX.

Isaac Vanderwerker,
Thomas H. Tomlinson.

ERIE.

Horace Clark,
William Mills,
James Stryker,
Samuel Russel,
Peter B. Porter.

GREENE.

Dumah Tuttle.

JEFFERSON.

Le Ray de Chaumont,
Orville Hungerford,
V. Le Ray de Chaumont,
Edmund Kirby,

Jason Fairbanks,
Isaac H. Bronson,
Perley Keyes,
Robert Lansing,
Nathan Strong,
Philip Maxwell,
Robert Nichols.

LEWIS.

Andrew W. Doig,
Francis Segur,
J. W. Bostwick.

MONROE.

Samuel G. Andrews,
William B. Brown,
Ira Bellows,
Giles H. Holden.

MONTGOMERY.

John Frey,
Stephen Reynolds,
Archibald M'Intyre.

NEW-YORK.

S. Fleet,
M. L. Davis,
J. B. Murray.

ONEIDA.

Milton D. Parker,
Stephen Fitch,
Sands Heginbotham,
Eli Savage.

ONONDAGA.

Hiram F. Matthews,
Elisha Litchfield,
Elijah W. Curtis,
Ichabod Ross.

ONTARIO.

Francis Granger,
Robert C. Nicholas.

ORANGE.

Charles Winfield,
John Barker,
Jacob L. Waldron.

OSWEGO.

Peter Skeen Smith,
Joel Tyrrell.

OTSEGO.

George Clark,
Levi Beardsley,
S. Page,
Amasa Thompson,
Gilbert Cone,
William Kirby,
Samuel Colwell.

QUEENS.

John A. King.

RENSSELAER.

G. Tibbits,
J. D. Dickinson,
R. P. Hart,
Jacob Merritt,
A. P. Heartt,
J. T. M'Coun,
R. B. Warren,
Amos Eaton,
H. Hickock,

W. Brookins,
H. G. Spafford,
A. C. Lansing,
A. Walsh,
E. W. Walbridge,
E. F. Willey,
D. C. Norton,
H. D. Grove,
H. Knickerbacker,
A. Briggs,
A. Knickerbacker,
A. C. Dennis,
J. Talmadge,
T. Van Vechten,
E. C. Genet,
Alexander Spencer,
R. J. Knowlson,
J. B. Fox,
L. Eddy,
J. F. Groesbeck,
G. M. Pettits,
J. Wadsworth,
C. Moffit,
Col. Hinman,
J. A. Ten Eyck,
H. Vandenbergh,
A. G. Hammond,
A. Worthington,
Z. Hewit,
D. Lemman.

ROCKLAND.

C. I. Blauvelt.

SARATOGA.

H. W. Delavan,
P. Schuyler,
O. G. Otis,
James Brisban, Jr.
Ebenezer Couch,
Isaac Geer,
Samuel Young.

SCHENECTADY.

W. A. S. North,
J. B. Duane,
Abraham Dorne,
Robert Sanders,
David Ostrom,
Derick C. Groat,
Daniel D. Campbell,
Harman A. Van Slyck,
John I. De Graff,
Alexander G. Fonda.

SCHOHARIE.

William C. Bouck,
Jedediah Miller,
William Deitz.

SENECA.

J. H. Halsey,
John Watkins.

STEUBEN.

John M'Burney,
Andrew B. Dickson,
Edward Howell.

SULLIVAN.

Hiram Bennett.

TIOGA.

Nathaniel Smith,
Joel Talmadge,
G. M'Dowell.

WASHINGTON.

John M'Lean, Jr.

YATES.

Aaron Remer.

On motion of Gen. P. Skeen Smith, of Oswego, the President was invited to submit some remarks in relation to the beneficial results of the society over which he presides, upon the agricultural interests of his county.

Whereupon the President delivered the following address.

GENTLEMEN,

I hardly need excuse myself for the defects you will easily detect in these remarks upon the few hours which I had to devote to them. I might have availed myself of the politeness of those who called for them, and delayed them till our second meeting; but aware that my want of habit of addressing the public, would only be made more apparent by labour, I preferred to give you, in a plain, farmer-like manner, the result of my meditations and experience upon a subject, which of all earthly pursuits is the nearest to my heart. I thought it also better placed in the opening of our transactions. I had with me, for my own reference, notes, letters, &c. which bear on the point before us, and I have made extracts from them which I hope may not be wholly uninteresting, and which I beg leave to occupy a few of your moments to read.

The call made on me shows that the idea I entertain respecting an AGRICULTURAL STATE SOCIETY, was also that of those who made it, viz. that county societies should be the support of a state society. Indeed, I do not well understand how the latter can be extensively useful without the former, and I think that *they* will, in their turn, be improved and strengthened by the establishment of the state society. Mutually supporting each other, they will find, like this beautiful confederacy of republics, their force in their union.

Such is the moral influence of an institution like this, which operates upon vast masses of people and of property, that when you come to set down coolly, and attempt to reduce to calculation some of the benefits resulting to the community, with all the allowances you can make, you arrive at a conclusion which baffles even the efforts of imagination, whether we look to the improvement on agriculture, or the manufacturing implements, or the different breeds of animals, seeds, machines, &c. &c.

Even the advantages which may be called collateral, are immense, but they are much more difficult to calculate. For instance, Gen. Brown, who has been so useful to our Jefferson county society, and whose irreparable loss we constantly lament, has made a calculation in his address which I have not heard contradicted. He computes that in the space of 50 years, the saving to his county in erecting stone, instead of wooden buildings, would amount to 10,000,000 of dollars. We cannot doubt that the excitement, the emulation, the increase of property produced by our agricultural societies, will be one of the causes which will promote and help such an improvement, yet how can we form an estimate of what is to be justly attributed to the society. You could not help admiring such a result, and similar ones, if the probable benefits could be brought correctly to the test of calculation. Indeed you will already find them immense, if you admit for the basis of them, only one half of the benefit procured by some of the societies, as you will soon notice in the extracts of letters which I shall read to you. The characters of their authors claim certainly from us a great confidence. Truly the benefits of such an institution are so varied, its disadvantages are so few, if there are any which with due attention can properly be called so, that a part of these benefits alone would be sufficient to recommend it to the wisdom of an enlightened people. I believe I should not go too far if I should say that, if it had no other good than to unite us, one day in the year, the institution ought to subsist. As this proposition may appear at first sight exaggerated, let us consider our social condition, and the influence upon it of such a meeting. We are in this country divided, and I am sorry to say sometimes widely, by political parties; we are divided also, but thanks to a heavenly liberality, mostly by forms, by a multiplicity of religious creeds. The first create private animosities and family dissentions; but the subject is too generally understood and too severely felt to require my dwelling longer upon it. The second prevents the re-union which takes place in most countries of Europe, of all the inhabitants of a parish in the same antique church, which from all ages, has seen their fathers ask the blessings of Heaven upon posterity. Prior to, and at the

close of the ceremony, they generally assemble before the church door, and an opportunity is given of meeting those with whom perhaps a slight quarrel had created a coolness, which, not serious enough to withstand a meeting at the doors of the palace of peace, would have degenerated into enmity by long separation. I speak from experience when I say, that these re-unions tend greatly to entertain concord in a neighbourhood. These agricultural meetings are the only ones in which the people of this country can unite with one interest and one heart. Who has not felt there a pleasure at seeing an old friend from whom distance or business had separated him perhaps during the whole year; or making an acquaintance which will be a source of comfort and pleasure hereafter; or having an opportunity, and perchance an obligation, to speak to one whom some reason, perhaps after all very foolish, had alienated. I have here considered those meetings only with regard to their social benefits, and they alone would be sufficient. The others have, I believe, been already remarked; and every one of you will, for instance admit that the communication of information and results of experiments which it permits, are among the greatest of those. For my part, gentlemen, the pleasure, the benefit which I have derived from these national jubilees, are such that in the hope they may have the same effect upon others, I would not regret all my exertions in this cause, and would still continue to do all in my power, if no other result should be obtained.

If it is said, that faults exist in the constitution, or at least in the management of these societies; I grant the fact the more willingly, as I draw from it one of the strong proofs in their favour. For as neither these defects nor the great benefits of the societies can reasonably be denied, and as the first may be very easily remedied, it follows that our societies would greatly augment in their usefulness. I appeal to the people of the United States at large, and ask them what would be their condition, if before the adoption of this constitution, which has so rapidly elevated this country to its present state of glorious independence and prosperity, the defects of the old system had led them into disgust and discouragement?

To ascertain positively whether the benefits I had remarked, as well as those I have met with, either at home or in my travels, had extended generally throughout the state, and even out of its boundaries, I addressed several questions to different persons in and out of the state.

You will see, in the answers of which I shall quote extracts, that the opinion of these respectable gentlemen, is unanimous upon the most important points. All agree in saying that the agricultural societies have promoted excitement and emulation, to the great benefit of the community at large. Let us analyze and examine these different statements and opinions so as to enable us to form and adopt one of our own.

We will first notice a declaration which requires our full confidence and assent, when we consider it is pronounced by the distinguished statesman, who received and deserved the greatest proof of confidence and regard from these United States.* He considers the advancement of agriculture as the primary object "of national prosperity." You will no doubt regret as much as I do the circumstances which prevented him from answering more fully my several inquiries relative to the agricultural societies in Virginia; his letter, however, shows that in that state they have had generally a valuable effect, in exciting attention and emulation on subjects of rural economy, and in circulating instruction on them.

The state of Pennsylvania having more analogy with ours, by its climate and productions, you will be more struck by what can be told to you of the results of the institutions of their agricultural societies, and you will feel more the whole extent of the respect we owe to the assertions of the late president of the Philadelphia society for promoting agriculture,† when I observe to you, that it is the first institution of the kind in the United States. He wrote: "the visible marks of emulation and improvement appear in every quarter of our country. They are in their nature progressive and do not appear like the fancied works of magic. In our state (our parent society excepted) agricultural associations

* James Madison. † Judge Peters.

"have but recently been formed, but the prospects are highly "encouraging." Had he not been prevented by his modesty, he could have quoted one single fact which alone must stamp upon all such institutions in the United States, the character of great usefulness. I mean the introduction by him of the use of gypsum into this country. Before it was brought into use, I had witnessed in travelling from New-York to Philadelphia, the deplorable sterility of the land almost on all sides, and in penetrating into the most settled parts of the two states, I had been constantly lamenting the wretched condition to which generally such a fine country had been reduced by an improvident way of tilling the earth, which had quite exhausted the primitive soil. The inhabitants could see no other way to avoid the fast approaching misery, than to emigrate with their increasing families to a remote wilderness; when gypsum was introduced among them, (I might say *forced*, which would convey a more correct idea of the manner it found its way among the farmers;) it soon became generally adopted in the states of Pennsylvania and New-Jersey; and operated like a miracle—Emigration ceased.

The exhausted fields, and the barren hills, soon converted into fine meadows or rich fields of grain, gave courage to the farmer, and changed entirely his deplorable fate into a most desirable one. Instead of a vain attempt to describe the effects I witnessed of such a wonderful change, let me repeat here some of the expressions which an eloquent orator made use of when he was speaking upon that subject, to a respectable and numerous audience at which I was present in Philadelphia.

"Spacious and substantial barns were provided for these abundant products and increasing stocks, and dwelling houses abounding in every convenience, soon followed."

"With this new order of improvements, a new race of people seemed to spring up, for hope and animation had succeeded to general despondence."

"I do not envy that man who can survey such a scene without emotion."

"I hold that patriotism cheap which would swell at the

recollection of a bloody triumph, and slumber over an almost new creation, "which redeems] a people from despair, and spreads smiling plenty over the land."

But, gentlemen, it was not without a great deal of difficulty to encounter, and constant exertions to destroy deeply rooted prejudices, that the society of Philadelphia caused this wonderful melioration in the fortune and comfort of the people. Its members encouraged by the example of their worthy president, who was the first promoter of the measure, had not only to make repeated experiments, whose results they were giving to the public, but yet to offer generous rewards to those who would repeat them in their fields.

It was very soon afterwards that Chancellor Livingston, in his constant and most successful zeal for the good of his country, and while he was president of the first agricultural society of this state, introduced and encouraged the use of gypsum; and I have the most respectable authority for saying, that all those who made a proper use of it on their lands, reaped an immense benefit. It is not practicable to calculate strictly the increase in produce and in value of lands throughout the United States, caused by the use of gypsum; but if we attempt an estimate from such facts as the above, we are convinced of the immensity of the sum, though we may not approximate its amount.

The letters of the eloquent president of the Berkshire agricultural society,* will probably make a still deeper impression upon your minds than the others; as the state of Massachusetts is still nearer, and as the societies to which he alludes, having been instituted so much earlier than those of this state, have had a sufficient time to be tested by the results of repeated experiments. Let us notice only some of those results. "Improvements in agricultural implements, in all animals, in the selection of seed, excitement among all description of citizens, incalculable means of enjoyments and comforts from the extension of household manufactures. The resources of the country have been increased at least

* The late Thomas Gould, of Pittsfield.

50 per cent. The tillage products have augmented equally. The legal process diminished of one half. Money placed more in the reach of common people—undertakings in manufactories enabled to be commenced and prosecuted successfully—a far wider field opened for female labor and enterprize—the pursuit of agriculture considered as the most permanent object of regard and general confidence. At no period have useful knowledge and good morals so much distinguished the age. Lastly, the great secret of making a nation distinguished, which is to adopt that system which will call into action the greatest quantity of industry, and give it the most beneficial direction, is now in successful operation."

You will observe, that the multiplied advantages resulting from the agricultural societies in that state, are so extensive, and rapidly increasing, that their legislature has bestowed upon them the most evident marks of their disposition to encourage them by generous grants for many years passed, and which they still continue. They give within a certain sum to each county as much as is subscribed within the same, and the county of Berkshire is in this way enabled to spend $1200 annually. This is not the offspring of a momentary enthusiasm —the measure is not dictated by the simple desire of making an experiment upon contemplated, but doubtful advantages, for the welfare of the people—nay, gentlemen, these important institutions are adopted by a reflecting, economical, and most judicious part of the people of these United States, after a steady trial of several years, and a scrutinous examination of the merits and demerits of these institutions. But this is not all they will do for the encouragement of agriculture. You will soon see them, not only encouraging the establishment of pattern farms, but yet, considering that agriculture is a science as well as an art, its principles will be taught in many of their most frequented schools; and it may become, as it ought to be, the leading trait in the education of youth. I am not less confident in the good sense and intelligent mind of the people of this, our state, and I trust we will not be long behind our neighbours in the most patriotic and advan-

tageous institutions for the promotion of agriculture and domestic manufactures.

Now, gentlemen, if we have reference to the information contained in the letters relative to our state, we find in all except one, (which we must notice also hereafter) a firm opinion that these agricultural societies have been of great advantage.

It is stated in the letter of George Huntington, then president of the Oneida county agricultural society, that "the excitement has contributed to improve the condition of the people, but not to the extent desired. The products of domestic manufactures are much improved in quality and quantity."

Elisha Powell, president of the Saratoga county agricultural society says, "the agriculture of the county has experienced a very great improvement since the formation of the society, both by its partisans and opposers. The quality of produce has been increased double. The emulation excited, has been of great service, both as respects agriculture and domestic manufactures. The ladies have in a particular manner displayed a very laudable ambition. A goodly number entertain ardent wishes, that this system adopted and prosecuted with so much advantage to the great interest of this state, should not be abandoned. The employment of husbandry has certainly become more honorable than it was formerly considered to be: almost every professional gentleman is making many experiments in farming."

G. W. Featherstonhaugh, of Duanesburgh, president of the Schenectady county society, writes: "our laws for the promotion of agriculture have by dint of emulation and direct patronage carried the art much beyond the point which natural and unassisted progress would have reached, so that national wealth has been positively increased by the establishment of agricultural societies. In this county, it has already produced admirable results in the arrangement of farms, &c. &c. Valuable animals have been spread through the neighborhood. The patronage of the state has given respectability to agriculture as a vocation."

"The agricultural societies have been productive of great

good, as is better evinced—in more thoroughly ploughing and subduing the soil; in more liberally manuring and carefully saving manures; in a more judicious selection and best employ of seeds; by getting improved agricultural implements; by greater attention to the breed of domestic animals; by greater neatness in clearing, draining, fencing and seeding the farms; by greater improvements in fattening animals; the great augmentation of crops; the increase of roots; the vast diminution of ardent spirits consumed by labouring men: and lastly, the improvements in domestic manufactures of cloth or other dress."

If we turn to the letter of Uri Tracy, then president of the Chenango county agricultural society, we find that "agricultural societies have been useful to the community. The improvements in agriculture have advanced more in a few years, than they would have done in half a century without the influence of these societies. The effects have not been confined to the members, but even to the opposers of the societies. The visible marks of usefulness generally are the improved state of farms as to cultivation, fences, orchards, buildings, adaptation of crops to their proper use, improved breeds of horses, horned cattle, sheep and hogs. Domestic manufactures have improved in the same degree. The agricultural class have had their views enlarged, their prejudices removed, their resources displayed, and they feel their importance."

The testimonies which I produce here to carry that conviction into your minds, to animate our hopes and stimulate our efforts, are worthy your entire confidence. I addressed my letters to persons whose opinions on the subject were generally unknown to me; yet there is but one of those who answered my questions, who is not in harmony with the rest.* "Upon the whole (he thinks) that agricultural societies ought to be given up, and manufacturing societies substituted, or their object changed to that of the introduction of a competent manufacturing population."

To accomplish this, gentlemen, which we will consider as being the great desideratum of the warmest friends of the

* George Tibbets, of Troy.

manufacturing interest, we have no need to change our object. Nothing can attain it sooner and more effectually than by a faithful adherence to, and an energetic display of the principles of our societies. We all agree, that, to that end, some of our practices must be altered and improved. Our intentions are already and repeatedly manifested by our deeds, and we have confounded the interests of the agriculturalist with those of the manufacturer. Besides you cannot encourage one without promoting the other. Look to England, that great manufacturing country, you will see that the extraordinary extension and improvements in their manufactures, and the unexpected increase in their population, began with the encouragements of all kinds given about 30 years ago to their agriculture. Look to France—a most cruel civil war, and a war with all Europe, combined their devastations to destroy more than a million of its inhabitants. But agriculture is encouraged—abundance follows. Their manufactures flourish to a degree never known before in that country.

Suppose that in a county the land, being badly cultivated, could not offer a sufficient supply of either vegetable or animal food to the manufacturers and their cattle, by the bad management or ill conduct of the farmers; the provisions of every kind would be a great deal higher than in other parts of the country. Suppose the population decreasing—the morals and habits of the inhabitants deteriorating—in a word, general misery prevailing on all sides, do you think the manufacturing interests would be there encouraged? Nay, in the interior of the families, the children would follow the example of their parents—the loom would be as much neglected as the plough; idleness, mother of all vice, would daily extend its pernicious empire. Is it among such a tribe that the manufacturer will go and make his recruits? It *will not* do—HE SPEAKS OF WORK. They turn their backs to him; they will soon turn them to the land of their fathers, and to their creditors, or to those who are meditating and preaching a reform.

I will be told that the manufacturer will call to his aid artizans from other parts. His money no doubt will attract them, and his money will maintain them. But how long will

he be able to keep his workmen; how long will he be able to sustain the competition with other manufacturers not laboring under similar disadvantages? He must renounce his fabrics, or be ruined.

Let us fix our attention upon an order of things quite different, and the better to illustrate the advantages of agricultural societies, let us choose for the contrast, the county where there has been one in constant operation for 14 years—and in fact the only county in the state where there is one agricultural society. There you have a number of spacious houses of public worship, a great many school houses, a sufficient number of saw and grist-mills, stores in every direction, well supplied, good roads, and in a word, most of the advantages of an old settled country, and chiefly, the most important, a good set of inhabitants, increasing daily not only in number but in morality and good habits. We have been also improving in our agricultural and manufacturing pursuits, although we have yet considerable to do, chiefly in the first.

But suppose, gentlemen, that we pursue with constancy and energy the same measures which we have seen so successfully followed in our neighbouring state—is it not evident that we will attain the same results? How much greater however, when combined with our natural advantages and the cheapness of our land! How happy then will be the fate of our farmers and other inhabitants! The farmer will be able to insure not only the existence, but the welfare and happiness of his whole family about him. Those to whom he cannot give a lot of land, or who have a preference for manufacturing, he will be able to employ at home, having enough to buy all the needful implements. There, in the bosom of their families, with good examples before them, they will become substantial and steady manufacturers. They will get attached to the part of the country where they will find health, plenty and happiness in the midst of their friends. There the great manufacturer will find not only an abundant and cheap supply of the necessaries of life, and the greatest part of the materials he needs for his fabric, but also the hands he wants to work them, hands vastly preferable on all accounts to tran-

sient and inconstant foreigners. Thence the perfect alliance of the farmer and the manufacturer, supporting one another and rising rapidly to a prosperity which would be the more undisturbed as it would not be founded upon the varying and unsteady support of distant consumers. Is not that the surest, nay, the only way, which can be depended on with any degree of certainty to "ensure a competent manufacturing population."

As I am particularly desired to allude here to the results produced by our agricultural society in Jefferson county, I must state farther. The benefits of our institution are evident even to the most superficial observer, and the indifferent themselves (as to enemies I am not aware that we have any) do not pretend to deny them in their own justification. We find that spirit and emulation which are necessary to succeed in any thing, excited by the distinction attendant upon our notice; without referring to more ordinary improvements in our cultivation, our stock, &c. new branches of industry, recommended at our meetings, have been introduced. Mulberry trees have been planted and multiplied; cocoons raised, and a beautiful specimen of sewing silk raised and spun in the family of one of our farmers, exhibited at our last anniversary;* and a variety of grapes have been introduced, both native and foreign, including the choicest of the latter, which ripen perfectly in the open air without a wall.†

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* The thrifty appearance of several young nurseries of the white mulberry, which furnishes the food for the silk-worm, shows that the tree may be cultivated among us, without difficulty; and a successful experiment this season, by the president of the society, in rearing the worm, removes the only doubt that the business may be made a source of profit to every man, who has room for a few mulberry trees. The cocoons produced in the United States, have been pronounced superior to those of Europe, and those produced by Mr. Le Ray de Chaumont are believed to be equal to any in the country. *Major Kirby's Address*, 1831.

† The adaptation of our soil and climate to the production of the grape, is now placed beyond a doubt, by the uniform success which has attended the culture of numerous native and foreign varieties, in almost every kind of soil and exposition, in all parts of the county: as well of the foreign varieties, introduced from the nurseries at Albany and New-York, as of those imported directly from France, and distributed gratuitously among the members of the society. Of these last, a vine, the *meunier*, in Major Brown's garden in Brownville, a cutting four year's ago, produced two hundred fine clusters last year, and more than three hundred this season. *Major Kirby's Address*, 1831.

It is well known and acknowledged out of our county, that our breed of neat cattle and horses enjoy a distinguished reputation. In proof of the direct and general influence of our society upon the county, I might appeal to one of the most respectable inhabitants of our neighborhood, in Lewis county,* now present, who travelled last summer through the greater part of the west of this state. While admiring the beauty, the richness, and the wonderful increase of this interesting portion of New-York, he was struck with the difference of improvement in agriculture in that country and in Jefferson county : so much was it to the advantage of the latter. I asked this same gentleman, who is agent for large tracts of land in Jefferson and Lewis counties, whether the benefits of our society had been felt by the farmers generally. His pithy answer speaks volumes—" Undoubtedly, (said he) *my books* show it."

The benefits conferred upon our county by our society are the more apparent, as the support of the state was taken from us when a severe discouragement had been brought on by many causes, which it would be superfluous here to detail, but which may be briefly resumed in referring to the successful prosecution of the canal system, and the navigation of the Mississippi and its tributaries, by steam, which took away from us the current of emigration—the reduction in price of the public lands—the great fall in the price of produce, more felt by us from our comparatively secluded position, after having for so many years enjoyed pre-eminence on account of our facilities over other parts for exportations. It was then at an unfavorable moment that we took the bold resolution to continue our society as we began it, without the assistance of the state ; and it is chiefly through difficult times that we have improved our county and brought it to that enviable rank which it now holds among the counties of this great state.

To show in part what condition is ours now, look at this extract from the last address delivered before the society, by our distinguished member, Major Kirby. " It is about thirty years since the first inroads of cultivation were made upon

* Isaac W. Bostwick, of Lowville.

the solitudes of the forest, and we have advanced to a population of fifty thousand souls. We already begin to enjoy the benefit of a home market from the various manufacturing establishments and flourishing villages which are springing up in every part of the county. Many of our public edifices and private dwellings are constructed of the most durable materials, and in a style to do credit to a country older and more advanced in the arts and in wealth.—The neat stone farm-houses with which the country is studded at every point, impart an air of solid comfort, not surpassed in what have been regarded, as the more favored regions of our land. Especially, it is believed, that the exports from the county of Jefferson, of the products of her own soil, are greater than those from any other county in the state. Other districts are distinguished for some leading staple, to the production of which, the farmer bends every effort. We happily combine, in a remarkable manner, the products of tillage with those of grazing, and send to market a large surplus of live stock as well as of grain."

But, gentlemen, I am afraid that I lay myself open to the reproach of ingratitude, while addressing you as the organ of the only surviving agricultural society in the state, by seeking in circumstances foreign to this very meeting, proofs of our usefulness and of our success. Can we, in fact, shut our ears and our eyes to what is said and written in different sections of the state? Has not the existence of our society been quoted as a proof of the practicability of establishing others, and its success held out as an encouragement? You will, I hope, pardon an honest feeling when we say, that the favorable opinion which has so generally manifested itself, makes each one of us proud of being an inhabitant of Jefferson county.

If I am asked to what causes we owe the continuance of our society, I will mention two leading ones—the first of which, is applicable to all the counties in the state. We have carefully excluded politics and party feelings from every thing connected with our proceedings. "*The plough is of no party,*" is our motto. I believe that a less persevering ad-

herence to this rule has been one of the causes of the failure of many of the former societies, and I am persuaded that without it no society can long or profitably subsist.

The second cause I have alluded to, is not likely to exist in many of the counties. There are in ours, several large landholders, both resident and not, who have taken a liberal and enlarged view of the benefits conferred upon their property by our society, and who have contributed the greater part of our funds. We have never entertained in Jefferson county the idea of continuing our society without premiums, and the first enquiry made yearly at our meeting was, can we again procure the necessary funds?

There are other causes which brought on the fall of our agricultural societies. The principal, in my opinion, has been their financial organization and their mode of distributing premiums. To be entitled to the bounty of the state, and to form a society in a county, it being necessary to have in that county a sum subscribed at least equal to the amount of what the state allowed—a number of individuals subscribed; and then the society consisted only of those very individuals who afterwards made their bye-laws and named their officers. The premium was agreed to and fixed by them—and most unfortunately, entirely consecrated to the members of the society! It is certainly not necessary to insist upon the evil of this practice, nor to say that alone it was ample and sufficient cause of unpopularity. We soon perceived this, and after trying some partial remedies, we attacked the evil at the root, by opening the field of competition to every inhabitant of the county, and allowing premiums to all, whether contributors or not, on the same terms; and we have continued this course after our unassisted efforts had given us a perfect right to do otherwise.—The liberality of the society has even gone farther this year. Having been struck with the rare qualifications of a lot of cattle which was brought to our fair by an industrious farmer of a neighboring county, a premium, equal to the highest given that day, was voted and presented to him.

Our premiums are not limited to agriculture, but are employed pretty extensively to the encouragement of household

arts and manufactures. We mean to extend them to horticulture when our means will allow it. Meanwhile we have given to the successful horticulturalist diplomas of honorable testimonials. It is useless to state here the other improvements which are to be recommended in the formation and in the bye-laws of the agricultural societies. They will find their place better in the correspondence of the state society with the committees of the different counties, after more mature consideration.

Here I am asked whether in recommending so earnestly the formation of state and county agricultural societies, I have in contemplation in their behalf and for promoting their speedy and effectual organization, immediate pecuniary assistance from the legislature of the state. I answer promptly—no—though I am persuaded that no money could be more judiciously employed, and that none would produce a greater benefit to the state. I consider that the organization of the late agricultural societies had not taken hold of the sympathies of the people. The idea that the sum given by the state was taken from the many for the benefit of a few, is still too deeply rooted in their minds. Under those impressions, if the legislature granted any thing, it would probably be such a boon, as would, under more favorable circumstances, appear unworthy of this great community, and would at all events, be totally inadequate to the objects in view. It is much better to begin by laying a new and solid foundation for the whole system. A state society will, by its influence and advice, promote the formation of county societies wherever the sacred fire may be rekindled by zealous individuals: corresponding committees formed in every county will send to a common focus all the information they may gather, whence after being digested and arranged, it will return to the counties and spread correct and useful documents throughout the state. I fondly hope that a manifestation of feeling favorable to the *first and greatest interest* of the people of this state, will be exhibited in the course of the year, and that next winter an application for support, far from being looked on with indifference by the farmers of the state, will be hailed and supported

with general approbation. An enlightened legislature, encouraged by the support of its constituents, will see that all that is wanted in this fertile state, in order to have nothing to envy its immediate neighbours of the south and east is, that the people be true to themselves—and, as in the cause of internal improvements, when we did enter the lists, we at once out-run our sister states; so in this, the first, the noblest cause of such a people as ours, we will take our rank and walk in front.

I will conclude, gentlemen, by adverting in a few words to the most important effect which any institution can have, namely, to improve the moral and religious condition of the people. Although I do not mean to attribute entirely these great improvements to our agricultural pursuits, yet I hope I am not too sanguine in the belief, that a proper attention to them is of all others the best calculated to elevate man to a due sense of his duty to the Divinity. Other studies and occupations may, and often do, meliorate man's understanding and improve him in the first of all knowledge—not so much, as has been said, of himself, but of his Creator. But there are not many who, after having once gone beyond the simple and touching testimonies which present themselves to the uncultivated mind, and advanced some steps in the boundless field of knowledge, do not get dazzled at the light of their own genius, and intoxicated with their own glory. They think, because they have discovered many, and again many links of the vast chain which binds the phenomena of nature, they will arrive at the first great link, the suspending point, without finding there the finger of the Almighty! While one philosopher of antiquity had almost guessed the truths which a heavenly Redeemer was to announce to us, we find hundreds and thousands spending their lives in sleepless nights and thoughtful days, without becoming wiser in the eyes of God: and in our days of Christian knowledge, we see that while a Newton, looking far and deep into the great mysteries of nature, acknowledges every where the presence of an Almighty God, and the truth of his religion; many philosophers have endeavoured by their researches and their reasonings to destroy our belief in those sacred writings, against which, however, no

efforts can prevail. The study and the pursuit of agriculture on the contrary, brings us in constant relation with the Maker of all things, and in continual admiration of his works, without exposing us to the dangers accompanying more elevated sciences. The farmer sees in his occupation that of the first man and his successors. He finds it always the most esteemed, as he reads in those beautiful parables which abound in scripture illustrations almost always drawn from it. He feels, on reflection, that no other profession is so dependent for its success upon the favours of Heaven; and while it will give him humility to sustain its wrath, and courage and perseverance to avert it, it will inspire him with gratitude for its numerous and unmerited blessings.

The President having concluded his address,

On motion of the Rev. Dr. Willson, of Albany,

Resolved, That the thanks of this Convention be tendered to the President for the address just delivered.

On motion of Mr. Schuyler, of Saratoga,

Resolved, That a committee of publication be appointed, and that they be directed to have 500 copies of the address of the hon. the President published, for distribution among the members of this Convention.

On motion of Mr. Spencer, of Albany,

Resolved, That a committee of fifteen be appointed, to prepare and report to this Convention, a constitution for a State Agricultural Society.

In pursuance of said resolution, the President named the following gentlemen to compose said committee:

Edward P. Livingston,	Francis Granger,
Henry W. Delavan,	Eli Savage,
H. Hickock,	Philip Church,
Parley Keyes,	H. G. Spafford,
S. Fleet,	P. S. Smith,
E. Kirby,	Levi Beardsley,
V. Le Ray de Chaumont,	S. G. Andrews.

On motion of Mr. Bronson,

Resolved, That the President and Secretaries be added to the preceding committee.

The Convention then adjourned till 4 o'clock to-morrow afternoon.

Wednesday, Feb. 15, 4 *P. M.*

The Convention met pursuant to adjournment.

Mr. Livingston, from the committee appointed for the purpose, reported the draft of a constitution; which having been read by sections, and amended, was adopted by a unanimous vote of the Convention, and is as follows:

CONSTITUTION.

The style of this Society shall be, "The New-York State Agricultural Society"—its objects shall be to improve the condition of Agriculture, Horticulture and the Household Arts.

Sect. I. The Society shall consist of such citizens of the state as shall signify in writing their wish to become members, and shall pay on subscribing, not less than one dollar; and annually thereafter not less than two dollars, and also of honorary and corresponding members. The Presidents of County Agricultural Societies, or a Delegate from each, shall ex-officio be members of this Society.

Sect. II. The officers of the Society shall consist of a President, four Vice Presidents, a Recording Secretary, a Corresponding Secretary, a Treasurer; an Executive Committee, to consist of the officers above named and three other members, of whom three shall constitute a quorum; and a General Committee, the members of which shall be located in the several counties, and be equal to the representatives in the House of Assembly. The payment of fifty dollars or more, shall constitute a member for life, and shall exempt the donor from annual contributions.

Sect. III. The Recording Secretary shall keep the minutes of the Society. The Corresponding Secretary shall carry on

a correspondence with other Societies, with individuals, and with the General Committee in furtherance of the objects of the Society. The Treasurer shall keep the funds of the Society, and disburse them on the order of the President or a Vice President, countersigned by the Recording Secretary; and shall make a report of the receipts and expenditures at the annual meeting in February. The Executive Committee shall take charge of, and distribute or preserve all seeds, plants, books, models, &c. which may be transmitted to the Society; and shall also have the charge of all communications, designed or calculated for publication, and so far as they may deem expedient, shall collate, arrange and publish the same in such manner and form as they shall deem best calculated to promote the objects of the Society. The General Committee are charged with the interests of the Society in the counties in which they shall respectively reside, and will constitute a medium of communication between the Executive Committee and the remote members of the Society.

Sect. IV. There shall be an annual meeting of the Society on the Thursday following the second Tuesday of February, at the capitol in the city of Albany, at which time all the officers shall be elected, by a plurality of votes, and by ballot. Extra meetings may be convoked by the Executive Committee. Fifteen members shall be a quorum for the transaction of business.

Sect. V. This constitution may be amended by a vote of two thirds of the members attending any annual meeting.

On motion of Mr. Buel, of Albany,

Resolved, That a committee of one from each senatorial district, be appointed to present to this Convention the names of suitable persons to fill the several offices provided for by this constitution.

Thereupon the following gentlemen were appointed:

James B. Murray, of the 1st district.

Jacob I. Waldron, 2d do.

Horatio Hickock,	3d	do.
Henry W. Delavan,	4th	do.
Orville Hungerford,	5th	do.
Gilbert Cone,	6th	do.
Francis Granger,	7th	do.
S. G. Andrews,	8th	do.

The Convention then adjourned to 4 o'clock to-morrow afternoon.

Thursday, February 16.

The Convention met pursuant to adjournment.

Mr. Granger from the committee appointed to recommend suitable persons to fill the offices designated by the constitution, made a report.

Whereupon the Convention proceeded to elect by ballot the officers of the Society—Messrs. Delavan and Nicholas were appointed tellers.

On counting the ballots, it appeared that the following gentlemen were elected by a plurality of votes, viz.

LE RAY DE CHAUMONT, of Jefferson, *President.*

EDWARD P. LIVINGSTON, of Columbia,
AMBROSE SPENCER, of Albany,
JACOB MORRIS, of Otsego, and
ROBERT S. ROSE, of Seneca, } *Vice Presidents.*

PHILIP S. VAN RENSSELAER, of Albany, *Rec. Secretary.*

JESSE BUEL, of Albany, *Corresponding Secretary.*

CHARLES R. WEBSTER, of Albany, *Treasurer.*

HENRY W. DELAVAN, of Saratoga,
HORATIO HICKOCK, of Rensselaer,
JOHN TOWNSEND, of Albany, } *Executive Committee.* (In conjunction with the foregoing officers.)

The following gentlemen were appointed a General Committee, viz.

Albany—Henry W. Snyder, William N. Sill, Rufus Watson.
Allegany—Philip Church.
Broome—Virgil Whitney.
Cattaraugus—Staley N. Clark.

Cayuga—Joseph L. Richardson, Elias Manchester, David Thomas, Nathaniel Garrow.

Chautauque—Squier White, James Mullet.

Chenango—Thompson Mead, Uri Tracy, John Latham.

Clinton—Josiah Fisk.

Columbia—John P. Beekman, Wm. B. Ludlow, Wm. H. Wilson.

Cortland—Samuel G. Hathaway, Jesse Ives.

Delaware—Jabez Bostwick, Martin Keeler.

Dutchess—David Hosack, William Davis, James Grant, Isaac R. Adriance.

Erie—Peter B. Porter.

Essex—Henry H. Ross.

Franklin—Luther Bradish.

Genessee—Martin O. Coe, Sheubal Dunham, Horace Healy.

Greene—Anthony I. Van Bergen, Apollos Cook.

Herkimer—William C. Crain, Frederick P. Bellinger, Daniel C. Henderson.

Jefferson—Vincent Le Ray de Chaumont, Edmund Kirby, Egbert Ten Eyck.

Kings—Joseph Canselyea.

Lewis—Isaac W. Bostwick.

Genessee—James S. Wadsworth, Charles H. Carroll.

Madison—Matthew Pratt, Joseph Bruce, Sylvester Buelur.

Munro—Isaac Moore, William Garbut, James Sperry.

Montgomery—Stephen Reynolds, Archibald M'lntyre, Samuel Jackson.

New-York—Charles H. Hall, Anthony Dey, William Wilson, Jacobus Dyckman, Thomas Hogg, Abraham Bell, Charles Oakley, Gideon Lee, Alpheus Sherman, William Shaw, James B. Murray.

Niagara—Benjamin Barton.

Oneida—George Brayton, Eli Savage, Gardner Avery, Israel Stoddard, Ephraim Perkins,

Onondaga—David Monro, John C. Brown, James Geddes, Dan Bradley.

Ontario—Robert C. Nicholas, Thaddeus Chapin, Moses Fairchild.

Orange—George D. Wickham, Jacob S. Waldron, Samuel S. Seward.

Orleans—Abraham Cantine.

Oswego—William M. Cheever.

Otsego—Abraham Roseboom, Arunah Metcalf, Pascal Franchot, Isaac Hays.

Putnam—

Queens—John A. King.

Rensselaer—Richard P. Hart, Alexander Walsh, Abraham Knickebacker, Henry D. Groove.

Richmond—Richard Crocheron.

Rockland—Cornelius I. Blauvelt.

St. Lawrence—William Bacon, Theodosus O. Fowler.

Saratoga—Earl Stimson, Philip Schuyler, John A. Steele.

Schenectady—William A. S. North.

Schoharie—William C. Bouck, William Deitz.

Seneca—Tompkins Delavan, Erastus Woodworth.

Steuben—Andrew P. Dickinson, William Kernam.

Suffolk—Selah B. Strong, Nicoll Floyd.

Sullivan—William Gillespie.

Tioga—David Williams, Caleb Baker.

Tompkins—Nicoll Halsey, Charles H. Monell, Benjamin Jennings.

Ulster—Levi Hasbrouck, Jacobus Hardenbergh.

Warren—William M'Donald.

Washington—John M'Donald, Isaac Bishop, Tho's. N. Clark.

Wayne—George Barrell, Myron Holley.

Westchester—William Jay, Peter V. B. Livingston, Philemon Halsted.

Yates—Richard H. Williams.

On motion of Mr. Buel,

Resolved, That the executive committee be authorized to fill existing vacancies in the general committee; and also such vacancies as may hereafter occur by reason of death, removal, or refusal to serve.

On motion,

Resolved, That Henry W. Delavan, Jesse Buel, Horatio Hickock, Amos Eaton and William A. S. North, be a committee to draw up a plan for an agricultural school, or schools,

to embrace experimental and practical farming, together with an estimate of the expense necessary to establish and put the same into operation; and that the said committee report at the next annual meeting of the society, together with their views of the utility of such establishments.

Resolved, That Vincent Le Ray de Chaumont, Eli Savage, Charles H. Hall, Peter S. Smith, George Clark and Jesse Buel, be a committee, to report at the next meeting of the society, on the practicability and utility of establishing annual fairs, for the purchase and sale of live stock, seeds, and other products of husbandry, and of household labor.

On motion of Mr. Webster, and at the request of the convention, the hon. Ambrose Spencer made an interesting address, on the culture of silk in the United States.

Mr. Smith, of Oswego, offered the following resolutions, which were adopted:

Resolved, That the executive committee prepare and publish such an article as they shall deem fit and proper, for the purpose of stimulating the farmers of this state to plant mulberry trees, with a view to the culture of silk—this society considering it an object of the first importance, and believing that it holds out the prospect of rich rewards to those who shall embark in this patriotic measure.

Resolved, That the executive committee procure and distribute as extensively as may be in their power, seeds of the white mulberry, with instructions for sowing, raising and planting mulberry trees.

Resolved, That the thanks of this society be presented to the hon. Ambrose Spencer, for the information by him presented, on the silk culture; and that he be requested to communicate the same to the executive committee for publication.

Resolved, That this society earnestly recommend to the consideration of the respective counties in this state, the organization, at their earliest convenience, of county societies, for the promotion of agriculture, horticulture and the household arts. And it is further recommended, that in the pri-

mary assemblies of the friends of agriculture, convened for the purposes of such organization, the expediency of petitioning the legislature to pass a law, appropriating a portion of the funds of the state for the advancement of the above objects, should be discussed, and their sentiments made public through the medium of the press.

On motion of Mr. Schuyler, of Saratoga,

Resolved, That the executive committee procure the printing of 1000 copies of the President's address, and embrace in the same pamphlet the proceedings of the Convention, and the constitution and proceedings of this Society.

On motion of Mr. Spafford, of Rensselaer,

Resolved, That the friends of improvement in agriculture and horticulture, assembled in this society, view with approbation the efforts of the conductors of the "NEW-YORK FARMER" and the "GENESSEE FARMER," whose example is exerting a salutary influence on the public mind.

On motion of Mr. Waldron, of Orange,

Resolved, That the executive committee be requested to take into consideration, the expediency of establishing a weekly paper, under the patronage and direction of this society, to be published at an expense not exceeding one dollar per annum, to be circulated among the farmers throughout the state.

MR. SPENCER'S ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN,

I comply most cheerfully with the request of the Convention, to submit to them all the information I have acquired, together with my own reflections, on the culture of silk in the United States.

My attention was first drawn to this subject as chairman of the committee on agriculture of the House of Representatives in the 21st Congress.

Mr. Duponceau, of Philadelphia, an adopted citizen of the United States, a man distinguished as a jurist, as a scholar, as a philosopher, and as a patriot, called the atten-

tion of Congress to this subject by a letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, which was referred to the committee on agriculture. The committee, through their chairman, opened a correspondence with Mr. Duponceau, and learnt from him that a Mr. D'Homergue was then in Philadelphia; that he had been brought to this country from France, on the application of a society in Philadelphia, through our then minister, Mr. Brown, to whom they had applied to engage a person competent to teach the art of reeling silk from cocoons and preparing raw silk for market. Mr. Brown, after diligent enquiry, and having satisfied himself that Mr. D'Homergue was in all respects, the most competent person he could find, induced him to proceed to America. Circumstances, not necessary to be detailed, but which if known reflect no discredit on Mr. D'Homergue, produced a rupture between him and his employers. To keep so valuable a man in the country, Mr. Duponceau, with no other motive than to promote the public welfare, induced Mr. D'Homergue to remain here, until it could be ascertained whether Congress would not patronize and adopt a measure, which should gain to the United States, the knowledge of a most difficult and all-important art, the art of filature of silk.

In the correspondence which took place between Mr. Duponceau and myself, several important facts were ascertained.

1st. That the soil of the United States was well adapted to the rearing of the white mulberry tree, on the foliage of which the silk worm is reared—and that although the purple mulberry tree affords a foliage, from which silk can be made, yet it does not produce as good silk as the white—It was ascertained also, that the mulberry tree could be reared in every part of the United States.

2d. That the specimens of raw silk which had been sen

to France and England, after full experiments upon them had been pronounced of an excellent and superior quality. The cocoons yielding more silk than those of any other country—a silk of a superior texture and nerve. The causes of this are probably to be found in the vigorous growth of the mulberry tree and in our fine summer climate.

3d. It was perfectly ascertained and established, that the art of filature or reeling of silk, was one of difficult acquirement; indeed it may be affirmed, without the hazard of contradiction, that it cannot be learnt from theory, nor by the unaided efforts of any person however ingenious, and that it is to be acquired only by practical instruction from some competent person. When I say it cannot be learnt theoretically, nor by any unaided efforts of the most ingenious, I mean that it cannot be well learnt, so as to produce silk of an even texture, and fit for a foreign market or domestic manufacture.

To make fabrics of silk, it is necessary to pass it through a throwsting machine; if the texture be uneven, it is liable to break, and this produces waste and an injury to the thread. It is therefore a test of good reeling as well as of good silk, to ascertain what per centage is lost in the reeling.

Mr. Duponceau has stated in a letter, addressed to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, of the 9th of December last, that of a sample that he sent to London in 1830, the manufacturer states, that in the various processes of throwing, dyeing and weaving, it only lost 3 5-8 per cent, whilst French and Italian silks lose from 4 to 10 per cent.

To illustrate more fully the high importance of practical instruction in the art of reeling silk from the cocoons, let me advert to the culture of silk in the county of Windham, in Connecticut. For about seventy years, silk has been produced in that region; but it is sewing silk only; whereas the sewing silk of France and Italy is made, either from im-

perfect cocoons, or refuse silk, in the process of throwing. What an immense loss these industrious and meritorious cultivators of silk, are subject to from want of a perfect knowledge of the art of filature ; and yet they find a rich reward for their labours, and pursue it with a perseverance and assiduity highly commendable. If the cocoons produced in Connecticut could be converted into fabrics, instead of sewing silk, their profits would be nearly doubled. And if after an experience of seventy years, they have acquired only imperfectly the art of reeling the silk from the cocoons, with all their ingenuity ; how can we expect this art to be acquired without practical instruction ?

During the 21st Congress, the committee on agriculture, considering the culture of silk a national object, of the first importance, under the impression that practical instruction in the art of filature and preparing silk for market, was indispensibly necessary ; reported a bill for the establishment of a normal school in Philadelphia, or its vicinity, under the general supervision of Mr. Duponceau, the pupils in which were to be taught for two or three seasons by Mr. D'-Homergue : at all events they were to be thoroughly instructed in the art of filature and preparation of the silk for market. By the provisions of the bill, sixty pupils, to be taken from the several states in proportion to their population, were to be thus instructed : these pupils were to be young lads, not exceeding 18 years of age, having mechanical tendencies. Owing to untoward circumstances this bill, with every prospect of success, was not finally acted on.

The able chairman of the committee on agriculture, Gen. Root, has reported the same bill at the present session of Congress, and I know that he regards it most favorably, and I cannot but hope that his efforts will be crowned with success.

It is a fact, deduced from the treasury reports, that for several years past, there has been imported into the United

States, silk fabrics, nearly as great or of a greater value than all the bread stufis which have been exported. Let us pause upon this fact, and ask, whether if we are capable of producing silk of an equal or a superior quality, we are not neglecting, shamefully neglecting, the benefits, which a beneficent Providence has furnished us? Whether it will not be a reproach upon our understandings and patriotism, to exchange the necessaries of life for a luxury of foreign production, which we can so easily produce ourselves?

It costs scarcely nothing to plant the mulberry, it grows on any and every soil; the foliage may be gathered and the worm may be fed and taken care of by women and children —so far from being a laborious undertaking, it is a pleasurable one: it subtracts nothing from other agricultural labour—it interferes not with any of the business of the husbandman. The trees are an ornament to the farm, they may be planted as hedges, or as orchards. If the farmer has leaves to spare, he can dispense them to the poor in his neighborhood, and they can rear their worms, and thus hours now passed in idleness or play, can be devoted to the culture of silk. The hatching of the egg can be retarded or accelerated at pleasure to accommodate itself to the putting forth of the foliage. Six weeks complete the whole operation, from the hatching of the egg to the formation of the cocoon.

The cocoon having been produced, a market for them is necessary, and it must be a domestic market, for they cannot be exported, their bulk, and their incapability of compression, without unfitting them for filature, forbids it.

The fact at once occurs, that unless there be filatures, there will be no market for them. The young men to be taught in the proposed school, would under the promptings of their own interest, aided by patriotic citizens, establish these filatures in all the states, and would, in their turn, instruct our females in this art. This would at once open mar-

kets for the cocoons, and they could afford to pay the price of 40 cents per pound, the price paid during the last season by Mr. Duponceau.

Mr. Duponceau states, that some of the coarsest silk, reeled under the directions of Mr. D'Homergue, sold in Mexico for $4,75 a pound; and it is believed, that generally, it will sell for $5 a pound.

I have been furnished, from a source entitled to my full credence, with a statement of the clear profits of an acre of ground planted with mulberry trees, as orchards are usually planted, supposing the whole labour of plucking the leaves and feeding the worms are paid for, and the result is, that an orchard of one acre of these trees, at ten years old, would give a nett profit of $100 per annum.

I may be enthusiastic in my views, but after great attention to the subject, I have no hesitation in affirming it as my deliberate opinion, that the culture of silk holds forth a certain prospect to the agriculturists of this country of the richest rewards. I could cite to you high authority for this opinion. England has made great efforts to rear the silk worm, but owing to her continued rains and damp and dense atmosphere, she has not hitherto succeeded. On the first settlement of the state of Georgia, supposing the climate to be favorable, great encouragements were held out by the mother country, with considerable success—quantities of excellent silk were produced; but the war of the revolution put an end to the experiment.

If public attention can be attracted to this subject, if our farmers can be induced to propogate the mulberry; if our women, always ready to assist in public enterprizes, advantageous to their husbands and their country, can only be informed how to avail themselves of the advantages which must ensue on the culture of silk; and if Congress will patronize and support the measure by an appropriation for the projected school, our success I deem to be certain.

If that man deserves well of his country, who shall make two blades of grass grow where only one grew before; what rewards await those who shall be instrumental in promoting the culture, the general culture of silk in the United States, which must meliorate the condition of our farmers, by giving to women and children so profitable an employment, and which must alleviate the condition of our poor. This culture is admirably adapted to that system which has now become almost universal in this state, the collection of paupers in county poor houses; among the inmates of such establishments there will be many aged and decrepid persons, and children incapable of hard labour, but who would find it a pleasurable employment to collect the leaves of the mulberry, and to feed and attend to the silk worms. If those who have charge of these establishments, would at once attend to the planting of the mulberry along the fences and the roads, and other proper sites, there is every reasonable prospect, that from the culture of silk alone, in a few years, the expenses of the poor houses would be greatly mitigated, and eventually they may be able to support themselves from this source alone. I am very anxious to see the planting of the mulberry tree begun in earnest, by these establishments, because from the facts I have alluded to, they are peculiarly adapted to such enterprize.

There is another consideration, which strongly recommends the culture of silk, with a view of giving a profitable employment to women and children; the establishment of manufactures, and the introduction of labour-saving machinery, have greatly superseded various household productions. The exemption thus produced in household labour, require some profitable new employment, and it will be found in the culture of silk.

Gentlemen—If the State Agricultural Society, about to be formed, shall be instrumental in introducing into this state,

the culture of silk, upon an extensive scale, and if they effect nothing else, in my opinion, that alone will entitle them to the grateful thanks of this community.

I have thus, I am sensible but imperfectly, given a hasty sketch of a subject, which is in my view, highly interesting and important.

The Society then adjourned without day.

APPENDIX.

(CIRCULAR.)

ALBANY, Feb. 24, 1832.

SIR,

You will perceive, by the pamphlet which accompanies this, that a State Agricultural Society has been organized, for the purpose of improving our husbandry, horticulture and household arts, and that you have been designated as one of a general committee to aid in the furtherance of these objects of public utility.

Without presuming to dictate, or to limit the exertions of the general committee, I would respectfully suggest, that the following, among other subjects, will particularly merit their attention.

I. To encourage and promote the organization of county, or local societies, of agriculture and horticulture, as a means of exciting laudable emulation, and of promoting habits of industry, economy of labor, and improvement in the moral and social condition of society.

II. To add to the numbers and means of the state society, by soliciting names to their constitution, and contributions to their funds. As the society pays neither salaries nor perquisites, its funds will be exclusively devoted to public and useful objects; and it is believed the members will receive an equivalent for their subscription in the publications they will become entitled to. The benefits which the society shall be able to dispense, will therefore be measured by the extent of its funds.

As one of the most efficient means of diffusing information, and thereby increasing its usefulness, the society contemplate the publication of a periodical work, devoted exclusively to improvements in the rural arts. The better to enable them to fulfil their wishes in this respect, permit me,

In the third place, to solicit communications, as well from others as from the members of the general committee, of well attested experiments and facts,

1. *In Stock Husbandry*—in relation to the breeding, management, habits, diseases and the means of prevention and cure, of all kinds of domestic animals—methods of fattening, and choice of breeds.

2. *In Tillage Husbandry*—in relation to the cultivation of grains, grasses, field vegetables and other useful products—manures and their application, including lime, gypsum and marls—rotation of crops—improved implements—new articles of culture—draining—fences, including live fences—the orchard and manufacture of cider.

3. *In Horticulture*—in reference to the culture of fruit and ornamental trees, shrubs and plants, and methods of propagating them—the diseases to which they are incident, and the insects which do them injury, and the methods of prevention and cure—culinary vegetables, and the flower garden.

4. *In the Household Arts*—embracing household fabrics—rearing of silk worms—manufacture of butter and cheese—of domestic wines—the preservation of fruits, and their various preparations in household economy, &c.

By collecting together the practical knowledge of our best farmers and gardners, in their respective branches of labor, a very valuable fund of information will be obtained, which, while it impoverishes not the contributors, cannot fail to enrich, very greatly, the community at large. Such contributions, like the offerings of charity, are blessed to the giver as well as the receiver. It is a satisfaction perhaps somewhat peculiar to the philanthropic tiller of the soil, that while he is improving, by intelligence, skill and industry, his own temporal and moral condition, he is, by his example, benefiting those around him, and that his benefactions, in this way, are co-extensive with the knowledge and importance of his improvements.

Your name has been inserted on the general committee, under the impression that the society would find in you an efficient co-operator in their labors of usefulness. Should you, however, unexpectedly decline the duties which the appointment imposes, I beg to be notified thereof as early as convenient, that the executive committee may appoint another in your stead.

As the society propose to issue their first publication in the present year, it is desirable that communications intended for publication, the invitation for which is intended to be general, should be forwarded to me as early in the autumn as convenient.

Very respectfully,

J. BUEL, *Corresponding Secretary.*

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